



15c

CHALLENGERS

OF

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE



AUTHORITY

SEPT.

NO. 69

LINKNOWN

P.PROF
IS
DEAD!

THIS
IS THE
END
OF THE
CHALLENGERS!

WRONG!
I'M
YOUR NEW
CHALLENGER!





IT IS SAID THERE ARE BOUNDARIES WHICH MEN TRANSGRESS AT PERIL TO THEIR IMMORTAL SOULS... THE THIN, DOOM-LADEN LINES BETWEEN WHAT IS NATURAL-- AND WHAT IS NOT! THIS IS THE STORY OF SUCH A TRANSGRESSION, AND THE FOUR MEN WHO BRAVED...

"The SECRET of SKULL MOUNTAIN"

A CHRONICLE OF THE MACABRE,
COMPILED BY --
DENNY O'NEIL -- WRITER
JACK SPARLING -- ARTIST

B-247

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN, No. 69, Aug.-Sept., 1969. Published bi-monthly by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 2nd & Dickey Sts., SPARTA, ILL. 62286. Editorial, Executive offices, 909 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Murray Boltinoff, Editor, Carmine Infantino, Editorial Director. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT SPARTA, ILL. under the act of March 3, 1879. No subscriptions. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 41 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017. Copyright © National Periodical Publications, Inc., 1969. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred.

"This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition, nor affixed to, nor as part of any advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever." Printed in U.S.A.

DREADFUL EVENTS OFTEN HAVE ORDINARY BEGINNINGS! SO IT IS THAT A HORRIFYING QUEST STARTS AT **CHALLENGERS'** HEADQUARTERS, ONE VERY ORDINARY MARCH DAY...

LIKE THE MAN SAYS, PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT! I'VE BEEN PRACTICING FOR MONTHS-- AND I'M NEARLY AS GOOD A SHOT AS I WAS BEFORE I LOST MY EYE!

HOORAY FOR YOU! ONLY CAN'T YA PRACTICE SOMETHIN' QUIET?

BANG!
BANG!

WANT TO TRY THIS SCHMITZEL 7.65 AUTO-MATIC, RED? I'VE HEARD IT'S THE MOST ACCURATE HANDGUN EVER MADE!



WHERE'D YOU GET THIS BABY?

OH... A FRIEND GAVE IT TO ME!

HEY, MAN--! LOOK!

THERE WAS A SPENT SHELL JAMMED IN THE CHAMBER! IF I'D'A PULLED THE TRIGGER, THE BLASTED THING WOULD HAVE BLOWN UP IN MY FACE!



DO ME A FAVOR, BRAINY... BE MORE CAREFUL!

I WANT TO TELL HIM! I WANT **DESPERATELY** TO TELL HIM THAT **I** SABOTAGED THE GUN -- **DELIBERATELY!**

THE **FIEND** THAT LIVES WITHIN ME LOCKS MY LIPS... AND FORCES ME TO **EVIL!** *



* PROF'S MIND HAS BEEN SEIZED BY A MALEVOLENT ENTITY SPAWNED BY A DERANGED COMPUTER! THAT TALE WAS TOLD IN "ONE OF US IS A MADMAN!" IN **CHALLENGERS NO. 68.**



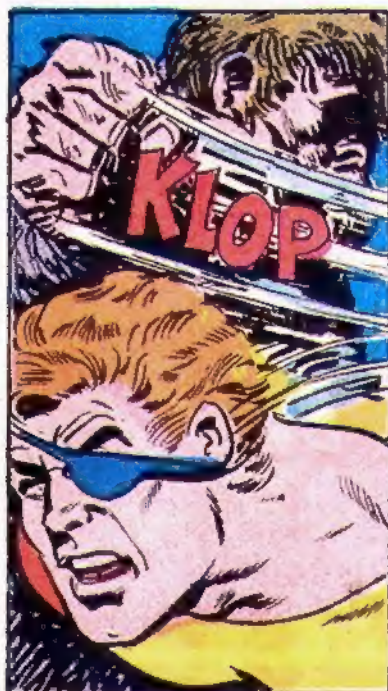


ROCKY DISAPPEARS INTO THE WHITE-LADEN FOREST-- ONLY TO REAPPEAR AFTER A FEW SECONDS...

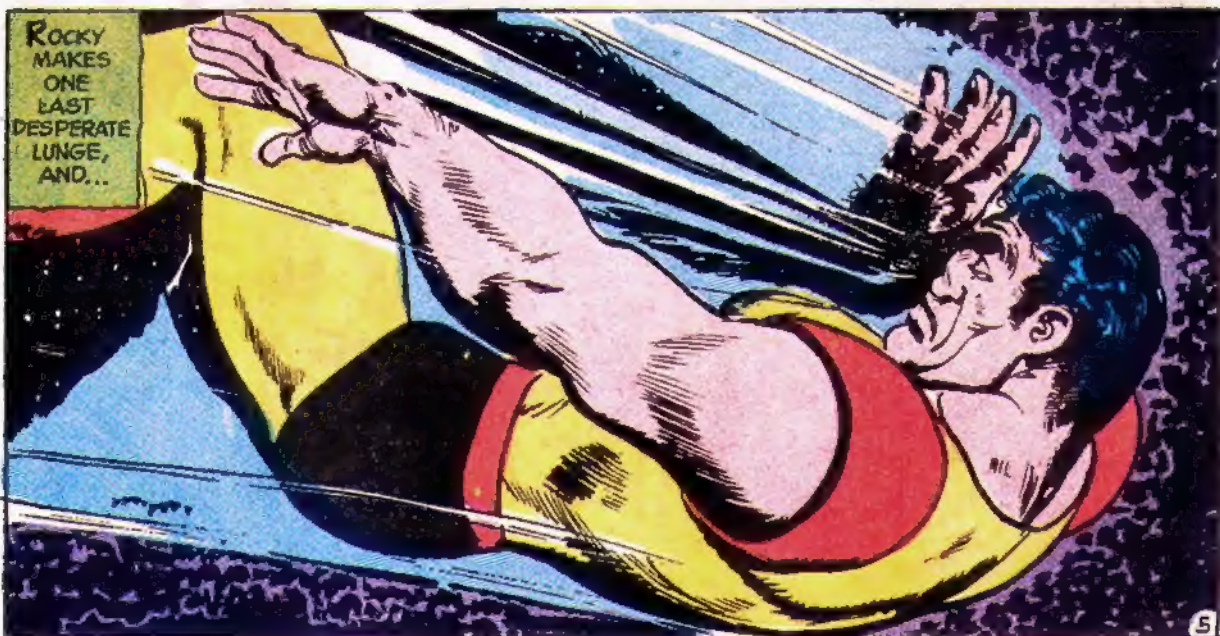


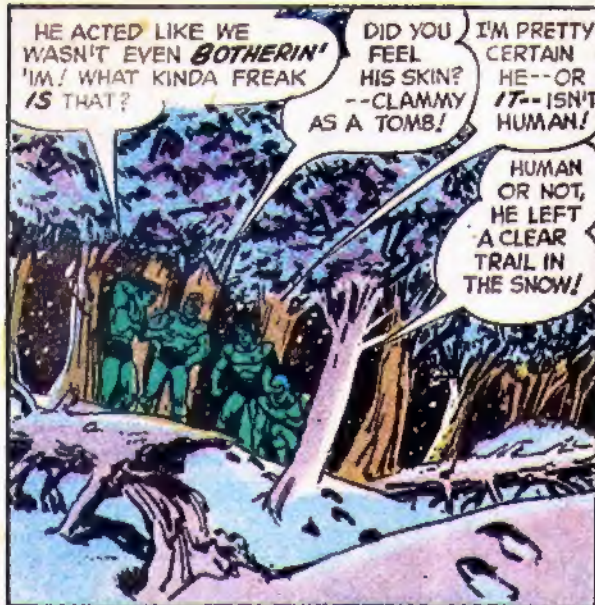
FUNNY THING 'BOUT THE OL' ROCK! --WHEN HE GITS SMACKED, HE SORTA TENDS TO SMACK BACK!





LIKE A MONSTROUS CAT SHAKING OFF RAINDROPS, THE DARK HULK DISPOSES OF THE CHALLENGERS!





HE ACTED LIKE WE WASN'T EVEN **BOTHERIN'** 'IM! WHAT KINDA FREAK **IS** THAT?

DID YOU FEEL HIS SKIN? --CLAMMY AS A TOMB!

I'M PRETTY CERTAIN HE--OR IT--ISN'T HUMAN!

HUMAN OR NOT, HE LEFT A CLEAR TRAIL IN THE SNOW!



AND WHERE HE GOES, **WE GO!**

IF I MAY, I'D LIKE TO SUGGEST WE **SEPARATE!** THE FOUR OF US BUNCHED TOGETHER MAKE A TEMPTING TARGET!

GOOD IDEA! I'LL FOLLOW THE FOOTPRINTS... THE REST OF YOU FLANK ME, TRY TO KEEP ME IN SIGHT!



INCHING THEIR WAY OVER THE UNFAMILIAR TERRAIN, THE COURAGEOUS QUARTET SLOWLY ASCENDS THE MOUNTAIN! AND SOON...

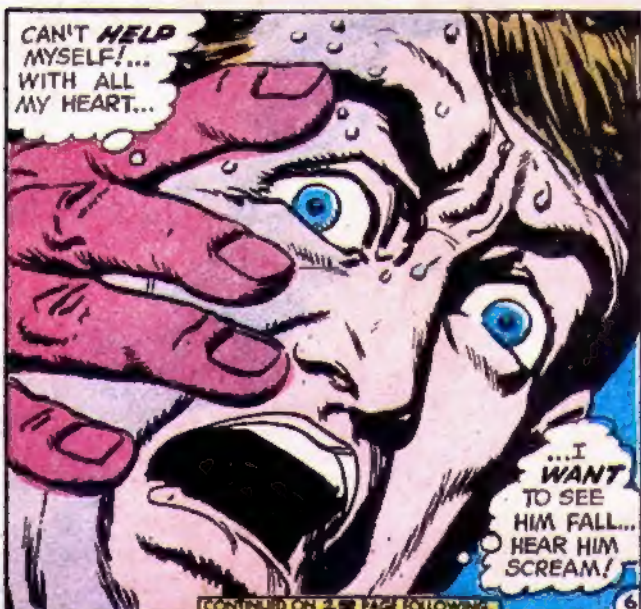
A CREVASSE! A SHEER DROP OF ABOUT 300 FEET...ANOTHER FOOT AND I'D HAVE BEEN **GONE--!**



NO...NO!... THE **THING...** IS TAKING CONTROL AGAIN--!



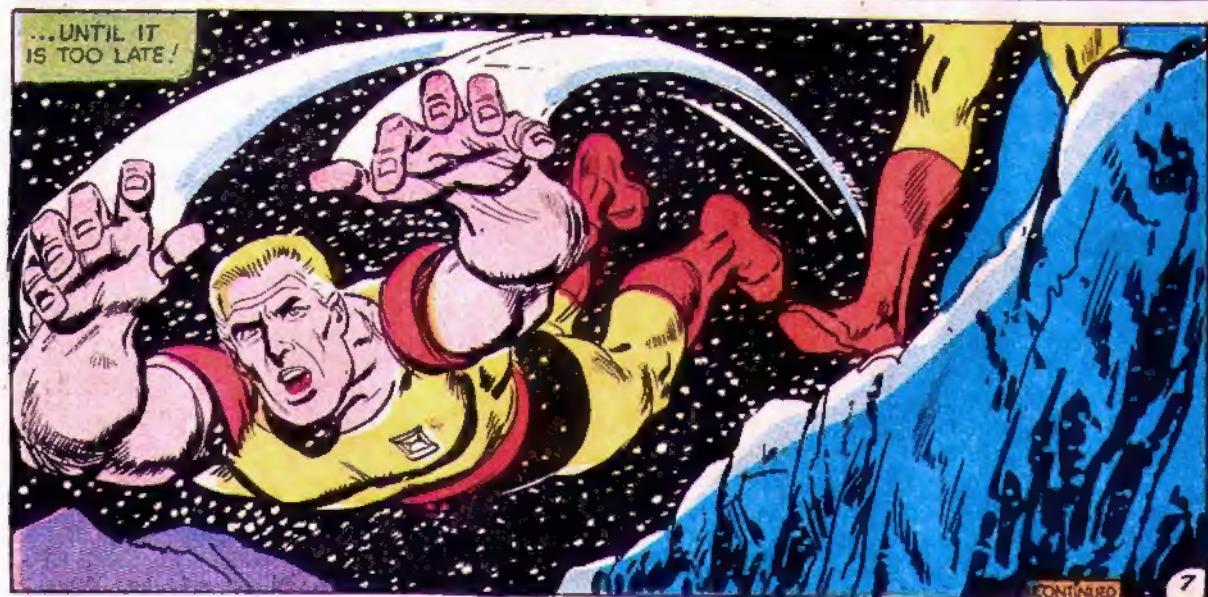
PLEASE...NOT **THAT!** DON'T MAKE ME **DO IT!**



CAN'T **HELP** MYSELF!... WITH ALL MY HEART...

...I **WANT** TO SEE HIM FALL... HEAR HIM SCREAM!

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 FOLLOWING)

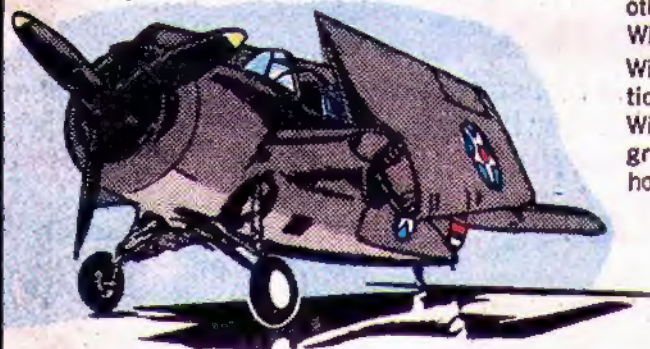


CONTINUED

7

NINE LIVES

**BUILD IT YOURSELF — REVELL'S
MODEL-OF-THE-MONTH FOR
JUNE, THE F4F-4 WILDCAT.**



In the early days of World War II, the stubby-nosed Wildcat was a born fighter, but vastly outnumbered by the Japanese fighters. Ah, but the Japanese reckoned without one Lt. Cmdr. James Thach, Wildcat ace and now an admiral, who invented the intricate "Thach Weave." When counterattacked, the Wildcats wove back and forth to protect each other from rear attacks. This maneuver gave many Wildcats nine lives.

With a 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wingspread, folding wings and authentic cockpit, your $\frac{1}{2}$ -scale Revell model is a true Wildcat in every detail. It's a joy to build, and looks great in a den. Sells for \$2, wherever toys or hobbies are sold.

Send 35c for color
catalog of new kits.
Revell, Inc.,
4209 Glencoe Ave.,
Venice, Calif. 90291.



INSTINCTIVELY, ACE'S
FINGERS SEEK PURCHASE...



...MOMENTARILY CLAMP
ON AN ICE-SLICK ROCK...



... THEN BEGIN TO SLIP
OFF...



SUDDENLY, AT THE LAST
POSSIBLE MICRO-SECOND...



CONTINUED ON 2nd PAGE FOLLOWING.



SHUCKS/
YA BEAT
ME TO IT!

SIMMER
DOWN,
YOU
TWO--

--I'M SURE PROF HAS A
REASON FOR HIS...UH...
INACTIVITY!

I'M DYIN'
TO HEAR!

SORRY...
I SUPPOSE I
WAS STILL
DAZED FROM
THE FIGHT!



APOLOGY ACCEPTED!
BUT IF YOU'RE **STILL**
UNDER PAR, YOU'D
BETTER WAIT FOR
US AT THE CAR!

NO...I'M
FINE,
NOW!
RED'S
PUNCH-
JARRED
ME BACK
TO MY
SENSES!

AT LEAST,
THAT'S NO
LIE! THE
THING HAS
RELAXED ITS
GRIP ON ME--
FOR THE MOMENT!

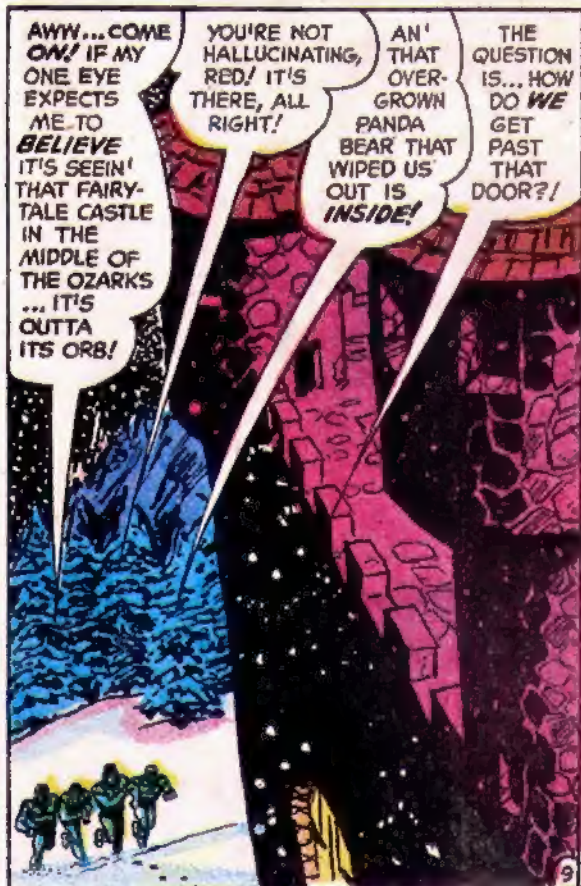


BUT I
CAN
NEVER
KNOW
WHEN--
OR **NOW**
-- IT
WILL
STRIKE
AGAIN!

I HATE
TO PUT
YOU
**TWO-
EYED**
GENTS TO SHAME
...BY
POINTIN'
OUT THE
LIGHT
UP THERE!

AND THE
FOOTPRINTS
LEAD STRAIGHT
TOWARDS IT!

SO WHAT'RE
WE **WAITIN'**
FOR--AN
ENGRAVED
INVITE?



AWW...COME
ON! IF MY
ONE EYE
EXPECTS
ME TO
BELIEVE
IT'S SEEN!
THAT FAIRY-
TALE CASTLE
IN THE
MIDDLE OF
THE OZARKS
... IT'S
OUTTA
ITS ORB!

YOU'RE NOT
HALLUCINATING,
RED! IT'S
THERE, ALL
RIGHT!

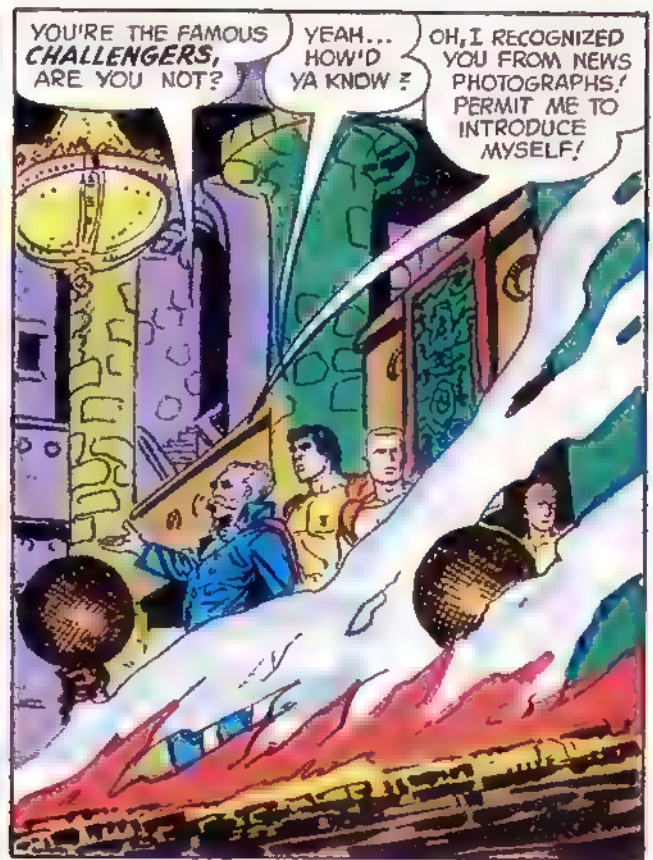
AN' THAT
OVER-
GROWN
PANDA
BEAR THAT
WIPED US'
OUT IS
INSIDE!

THE
QUESTION
IS... HOW
DO **WE**
GET
PAST
THAT
DOOR?!



QUITE SIMPLY, GENTLEMEN!
I SHALL BE DELIGHTED TO
OPEN IT FOR YOU!

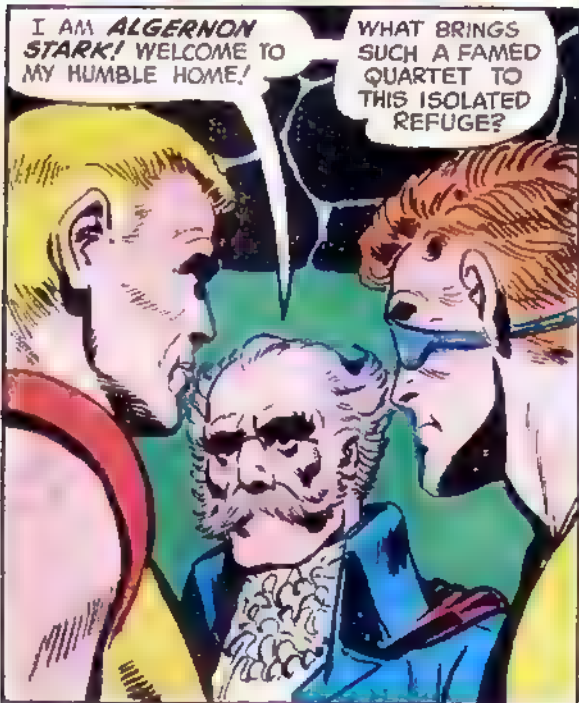
COME IN ...
COME IN OUT
OF THE COLD!
YOU MUST BE
CHILLED TO THE
BONE!



YOU'RE THE FAMOUS
CHALLENGERS,
ARE YOU NOT?

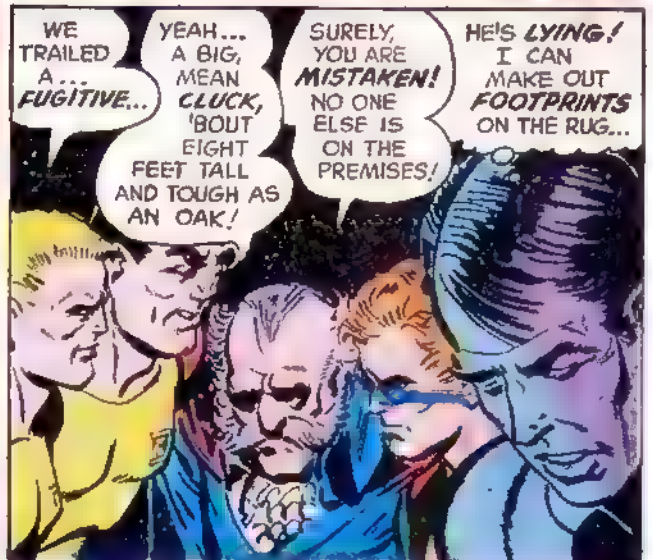
YEAH...
HOW'D
YA KNOW ?

OH, I RECOGNIZED
YOU FROM NEWS
PHOTOGRAPHS!
PERMIT ME TO
INTRODUCE
MYSELF!



I AM **ALGERNON
STARK**! WELCOME TO
MY HUMBLE HOME!

WHAT BRINGS
SUCH A FAMED
QUARTET TO
THIS ISOLATED
REFUGE?

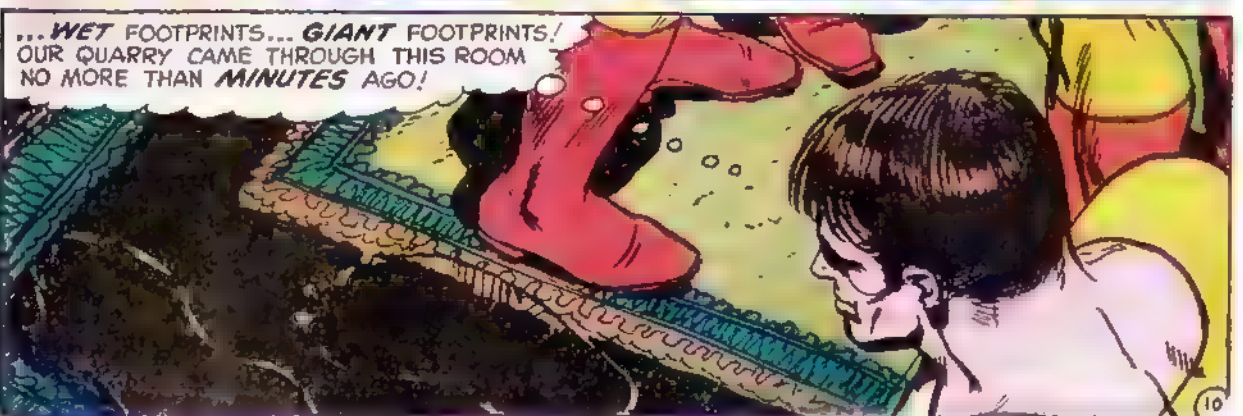


WE
TRAILED
A...
FUGITIVE...

YEAH...
A BIG,
MEAN
CLUCK,
'BOUT
EIGHT
FEET TALL
AND TOUGH AS
AN OAK!

SURELY,
YOU ARE
MISTAKEN!
NO ONE
ELSE IS
ON THE
PREMISES!

HE'S **LYING!**
I CAN
MAKE OUT
FOOTPRINTS
ON THE RUG...



... **WET** FOOTPRINTS... **GIANT** FOOTPRINTS!
OUR QUARRY CAME THROUGH THIS ROOM
NO MORE THAN **MINUTES** AGO!



WE HATE TO **IMPOSE** ON YOU, MR. STARK! BUT WE **WOULD** LIKE TO LOOK AROUND!

OF COURSE! AND WHEN YOU HAVE SATISFIED YOURSELVES, I INSIST YOU SHARE WITH ME SOME EXCELLENT SHERRY I KEEP FOR HONORED GUESTS!



ABRUPTLY, THE BLAZE OF LIGHT FROM THE CRYSTAL CHANDELIER WAVERS...**FADES...**

WHAT **HAPPENED?**

THE GENERATOR MUST HAVE SHORTED! IT OFTEN OCCURS DURING SNOWSTORMS!



I HAVE A FLASH! KINDLY WAIT UNTIL I CORRECT THE MALFUNCTION!



OKAY, CHUMS... WHILE STARK'S OUTSIDE, WE'LL SEARCH! RED AND I WILL LOOK **UPSTAIRS...**

...ROCKY AND PROF TAKE **THIS FLOOR!** AND BE **CAREFUL!**



I'LL PEEK AT THE **BACK** OF THE JOINT, BRAINY! MEET YOU BACK HERE IN A COUPL'A MINUTES!

CHECK, ROCKY!



ROCKY TIPTOES AWAY, THROUGH THE VAULT-LIKE ROOMS, GUIDING HIS BULKY BODY AS GRACEFULLY AS A BALLET DANCER...

CRIPES! THAT STARK BOZO MUST BE OUTTA HIS NUT, LIVIN' IN THIS PILE OF STONES...

...I'VE SEEN CHEERIER **FUNERAL PARLORS!**



WHO ARE THE
Gorgeous Girls
IN THE LIFE OF
JIMMY OLSEN?

WELL, THERE'S
Lucy. Ilona. Holga. Lucinda...

plus PLENTY OF OTHER CHICKS... BIRDS, FEMMES AND **Dolls!**
AND YOU'LL FIND THEM IN THIS **GIANT** ISSUE! ON SALE JUNE 19

DC GIANT **SUPERMAN'S Pal** **JIMMY OLSEN** SEP NO 172 25c

LOOKING THROUGH YOUR LITTLE BLACK BOOK FOR JIMMY?

I-ANKO TO ILONA, I'VE TURNED INTO A **FREAK!**

MISS OZFLONE CHANGED ME INTO A HUMAN PORCUPINE!

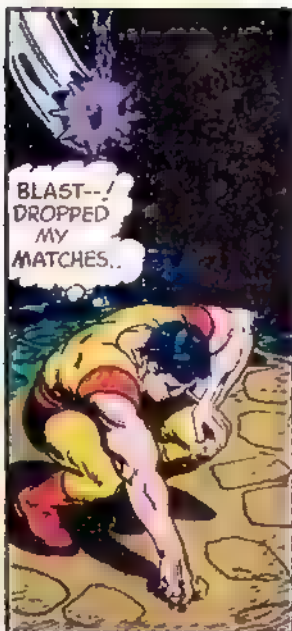
CHEEK SUPERMAN! YOU KNOW SOME OF THE GALS IN HERE REALLY GAVE ME TROUBLE!

BECAUSE OF LUCY LAMB, I BECAME A WOLF MAN!

ILONA HAD QUITE A CRUSH ON ME... A 300-POUND CRUSH!

Summertime begins with





BLAST--!
DROPPED
MY
MATCHES..



OWWWW!
MY SHOULDER!



KLUMP!



WHEW--! I MUST
BE GETTIN' OLD!--
SHAKIN' LIKE
A LEAF...

SOON'S I GET MY
BEARIN'S AGAIN, I'M
GONNA FIND OUT WHO
TRIED TO PULVERIZE
ME!



IF I HADN'T DUCKED,
MY BRAINS WOULD
BE SPILLED ALL
OVER THE FLOOR!
AS IT *IS*, FEELS
LIKE MY WING'S
BUSTED./

AT LEAST, I
FOUND WHAT
I GUESS WE'RE
LOOKIN' FOR--

I RECKON I
OUGHTTA BE
SURPRISED!
BUT SOMEHOW,
A **SECRET PASSAGE**
SEEMS **RIGHT** FOR A
WEIRD JOINT LIKE THIS!

HEY, GUYS!
COME HERE--
ON THE DOUBLE!

WE'RE
ALREADY
HERE,
ROCK!

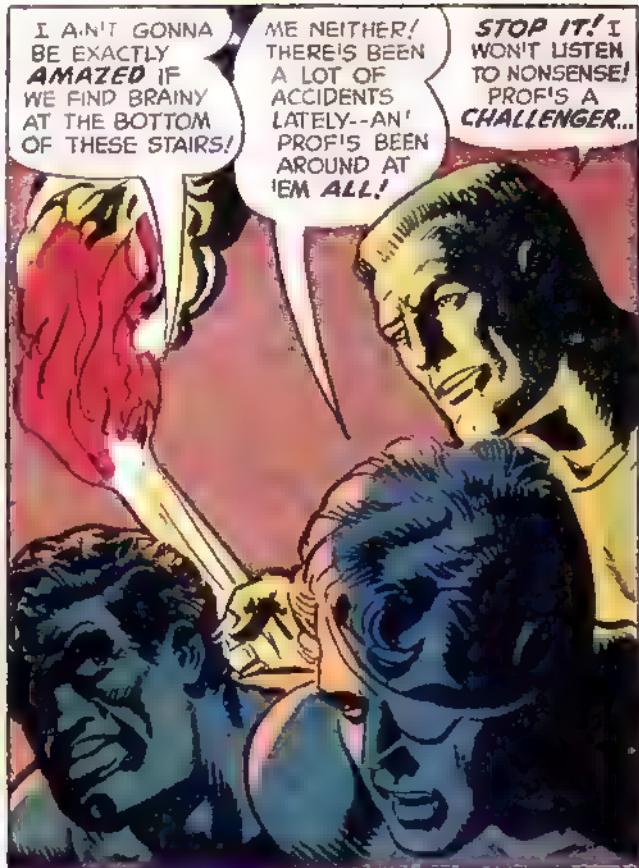


WE HEARD YOU YELL!

WHERE'S PROF?

I GOT A HUNCH I KNOW...

--THERE WAS SOMETHIN' REAL FAMILIAR 'BOUT THE CARCASS I PITCHED INTO THIS HOLE!



I AIN'T GONNA BE EXACTLY **AMAZED** IF WE FIND BRAINY AT THE BOTTOM OF THESE STAIRS!

ME NEITHER! THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF ACCIDENTS LATELY--AN' PROF'S BEEN AROUND AT 'EM ALL!

STOP IT! I WON'T LISTEN TO NONSENSE! PROF'S A **CHALLENGER...**



... HE'S ONE OF **US...**

YOU DON'T SAY! GO ON, ACE! GIVE US A REASON WHY HE'S LAYIN' JUST WHERE ROCKY FIGURED-- IF YOU **CAN!**

NEVER MIND! HE'S THE ONE TRIED TO CLOBBER ME WITH THAT SKULL-SPLITTER, IS THE REASON!

UNNN!



OPEN YER YAP AN' **TALK!** WHO YA WORKIN' FOR THAT'S AFTER OUR HIDES...? SPIT IT OUT, OR SO HELP ME, I'LL--

EEEEEEEE

A SCREAM!

WE'LL QUESTION PROF LATER...!

AGAIN AND AGAIN, A
HYSTERICAL FEMALE
VOICE PEALS THROUGH
THE FROSTY AIR...

EEEEEEEEE



...BUT PROF, WRAPPED
IN PRIVATE, TORMENTED
THOUGHTS, BARELY HEARS
THE SHRILL ECHOES...

EEEEEEEEE

ROCKY SHOULD
HAVE *FINISHED*
WHAT HE BEGAN!
I'M SICK...SICK
WITH A TERRIBLE
MADNESS...

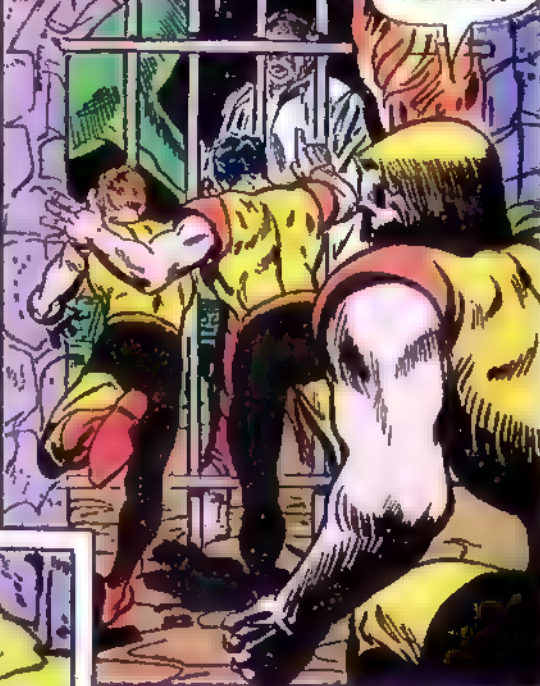
...AND
THE
ONLY
CURE
IS--
DEATH!



A
GRATE!

AN' BEHIND
IT OUR PLAYMATE
FROM THE FOREST!

I'M GONNA
TRY TO
SPLASH SOME
FIRELIGHT ON
HIM! WE NEED
TO KNOW WHAT
WE'RE UP
AGAINST!



GOOD
LORD!
IT'S
HIM!

WHO,
LEADER
MAN?



ELI SWADE!--
THE BIOLOGIST
WHO WAS
KILLED IN THE
ROCKSLIDE!
THE FEDS
GAVE ME
THIS PHOTO...

THAT LOOKS
LIKE ONE OF
THEM *BEFORE*
PICTURES IN
AN AD!--AND
OUR PLAYMATE
IS A PRETTY
SICKENIN'
AFTER!



EEEEEEEEE



A WOMAN--
TRAPPED
IN THERE
WITH THAT
HORROR!

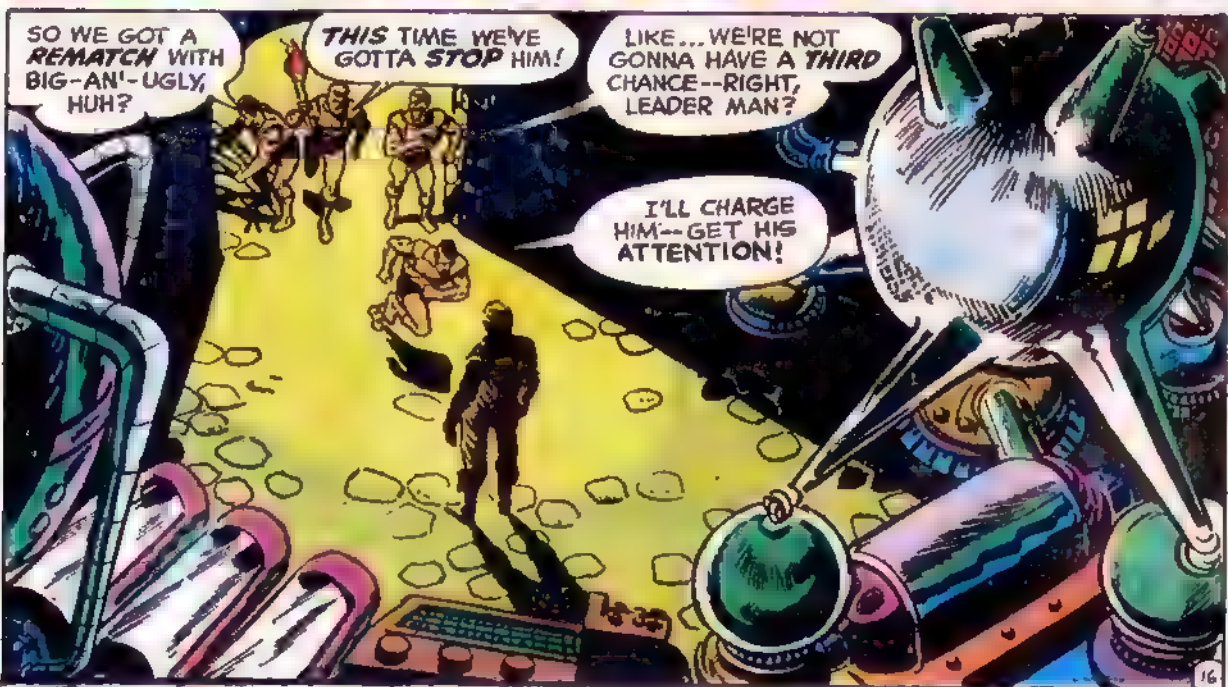
I CAN'T...
BUDGE...
THESE
BARS!

STAND ASIDE,
SONNY-BOY! GIVE
A MAN SOME
WORKIN' SPACE!

ROCKY'S MEATY FISTS WRAP AROUND THE ICY IRON... HIS MASSIVE MUSCLES BULGE... AND THEN...



SCREEEEEEEE EEEEE-AAK!

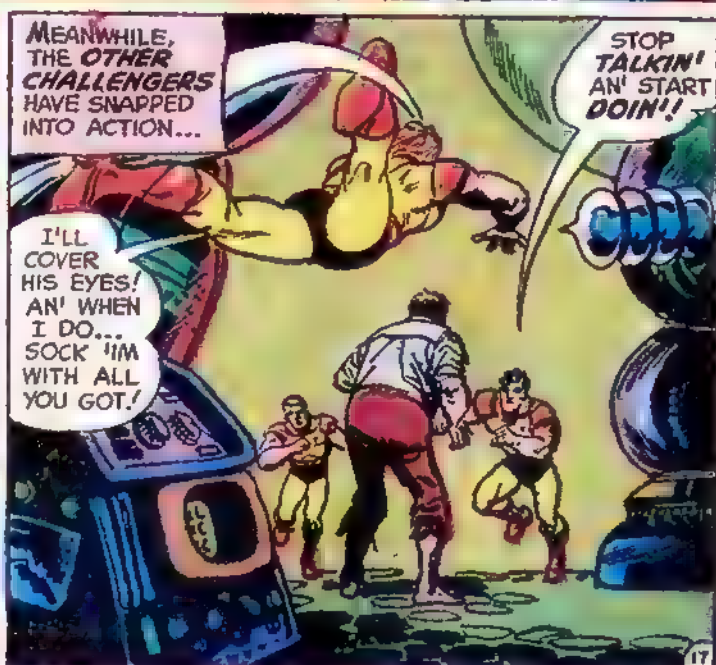
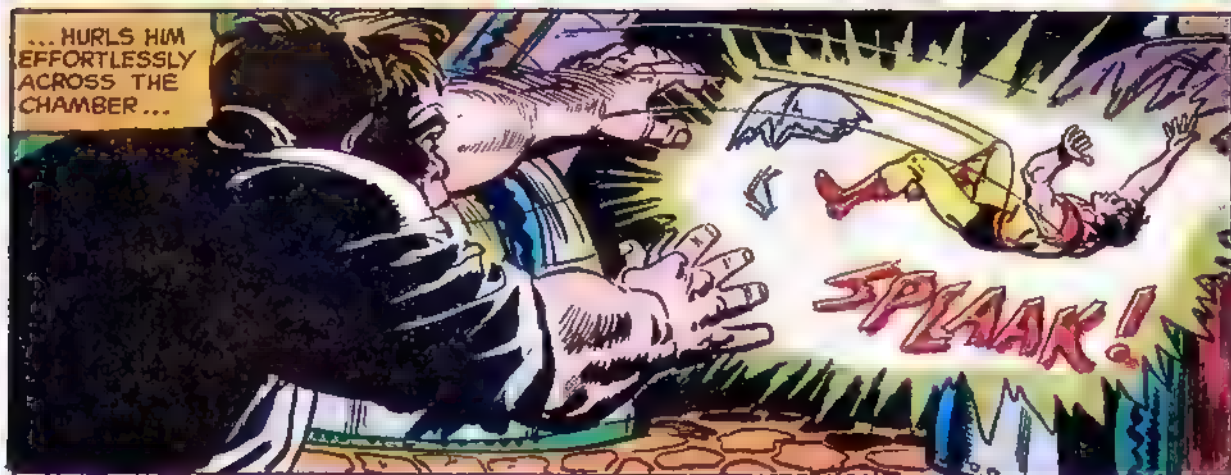


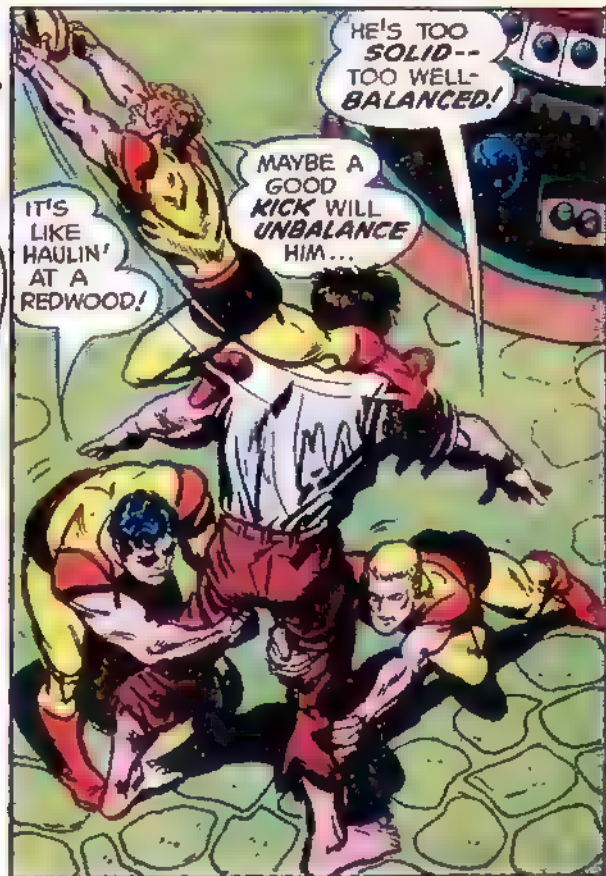
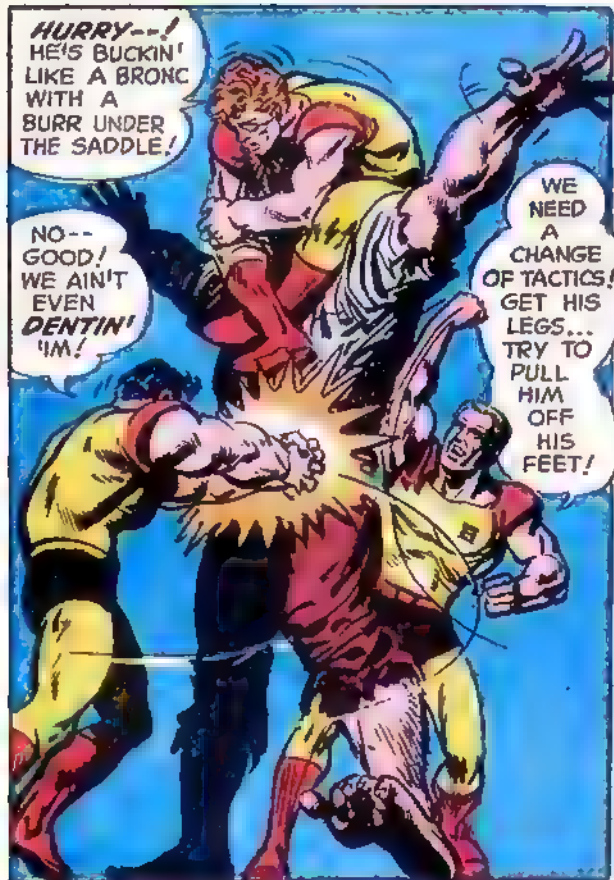
SO WE GOT A
REMATCH WITH
BIG-AN'-UGLY,
HUH?

THIS TIME WE'VE
GOTTA STOP HIM!

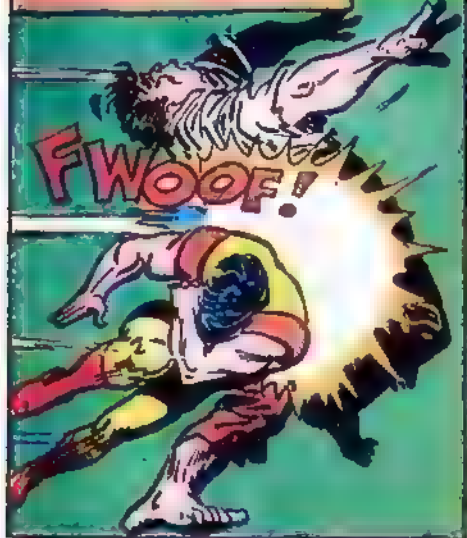
LIKE... WE'RE NOT
GONNA HAVE A THIRD
CHANCE--RIGHT,
LEADER MAN?

I'LL CHARGE
HIM--GET HIS
ATTENTION!

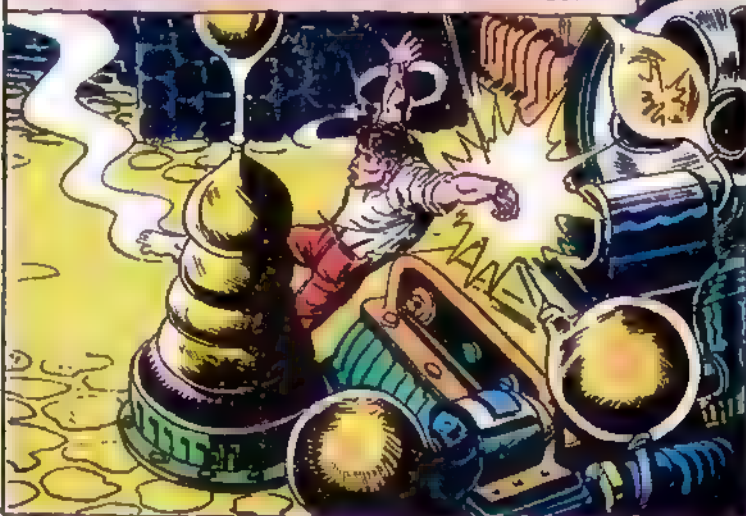




WITH PILEDRIVER FORCE, ROCKY
SLAMS INTO THE GIANT...



...THE GARGANTUAN TRAVESTY OF A MAN STUMBLES BACK, HIS
ARMS FLAILING AS HE ATTEMPTS TO REGAIN BALANCE! HIS
HAND BRUSHES A SPUTTERING ELECTRIC CABLE--



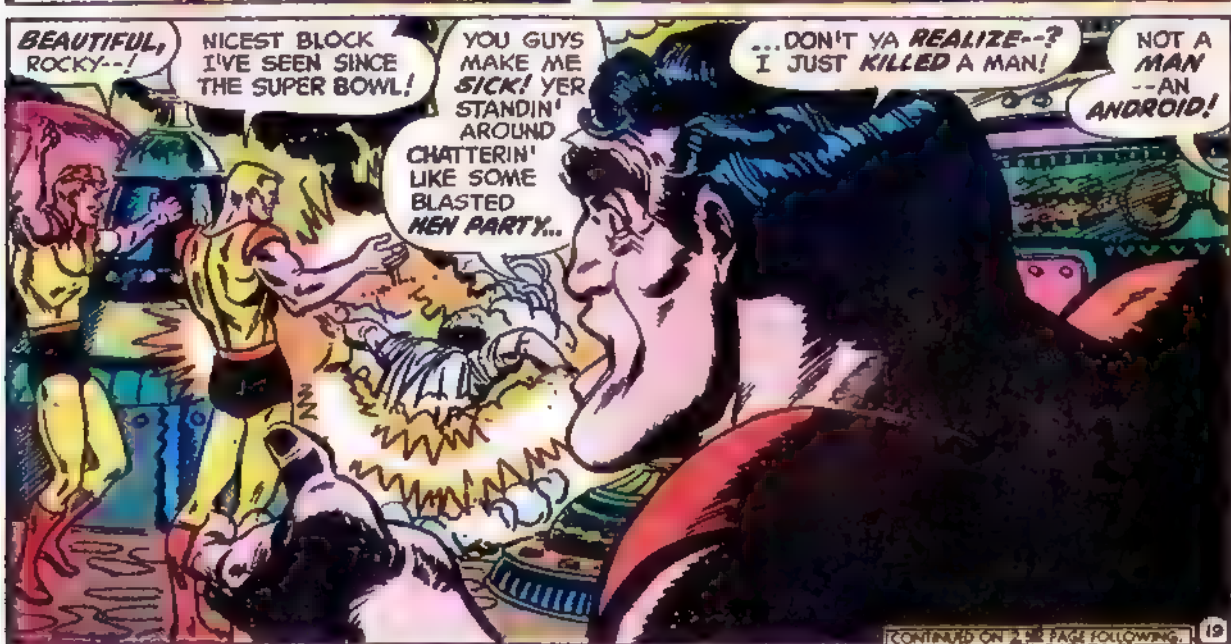
BEAUTIFUL,
ROCKY--!

NICEST BLOCK
I'VE SEEN SINCE
THE SUPER BOWL!

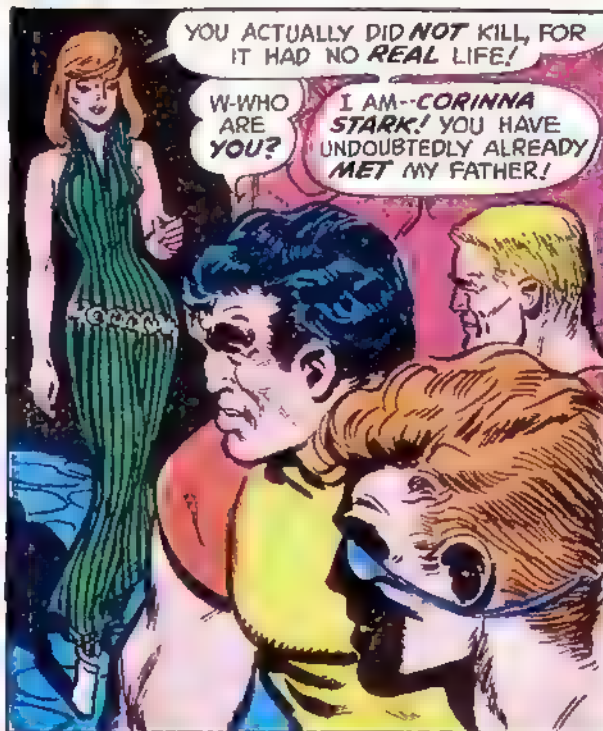
YOU GUYS
MAKE ME
SICK! YER
STANDIN'
AROUND
CHATTERIN'
LIKE SOME
BLASTED
HEN PARTY...

...DON'T YA REALIZE--?
I JUST KILLED A MAN!

NOT A
MAN
--AN
ANDROID!



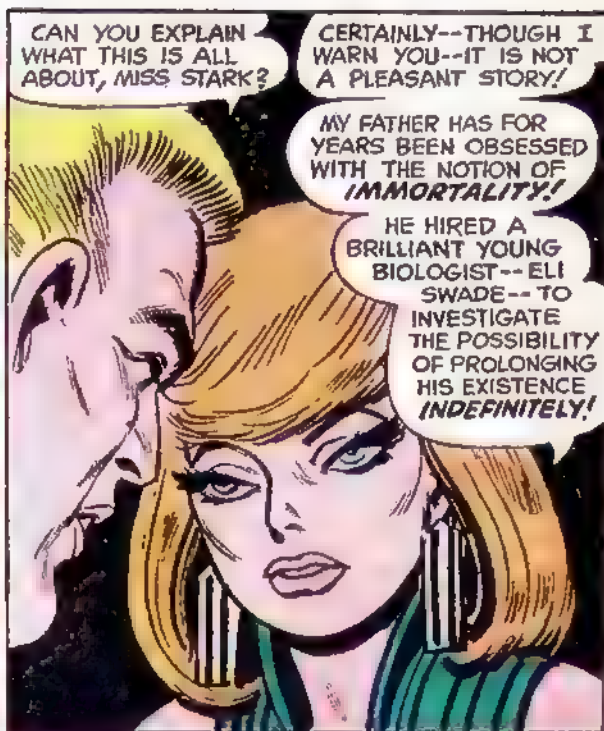
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING



YOU ACTUALLY DID **NOT** KILL, FOR IT HAD NO **REAL** LIFE!

W-WHO ARE YOU?

I AM--**CORINNA STARK!** YOU HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY ALREADY **MET** MY FATHER!



CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, MISS STARK?

CERTAINLY--THOUGH I WARN YOU--IT IS NOT A PLEASANT STORY!

MY FATHER HAS FOR YEARS BEEN OBSESSED WITH THE NOTION OF **IMMORTALITY!**

HE HIRED A BRILLIANT YOUNG BIOLOGIST--**ELI SWADE**-- TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF PROLONGING HIS EXISTENCE **INDEFINITELY!**



SWADE WAS ABLE TO GROW THESE ANDROIDS FROM ORGANIC MATERIALS --NEARLY PERFECT DUPLICATES OF THE HUMAN BODY, LACKING ONLY INTELLIGENCE--

--AND THAT INDEFINABLE QUALITY WE TERM **PERSONALITY!**



BEFORE THE EXPERIMENTS WERE COMPLETED, SWADE WAS MORTALLY INJURED! MY FATHER TRIED TO CARRY ON!

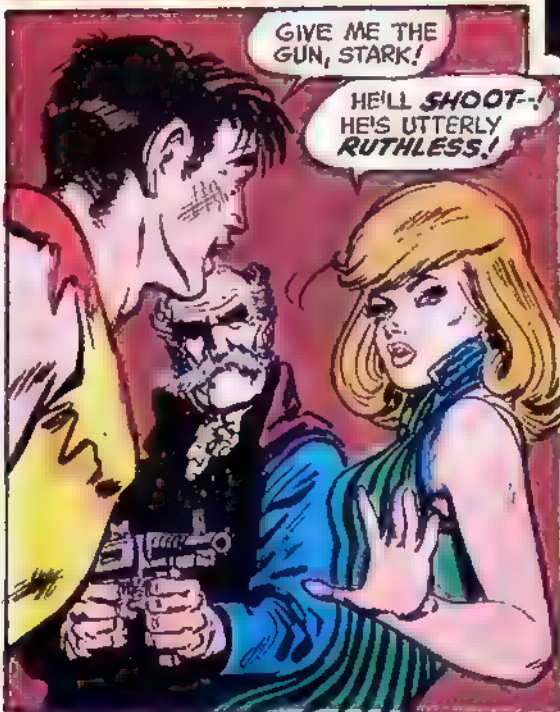
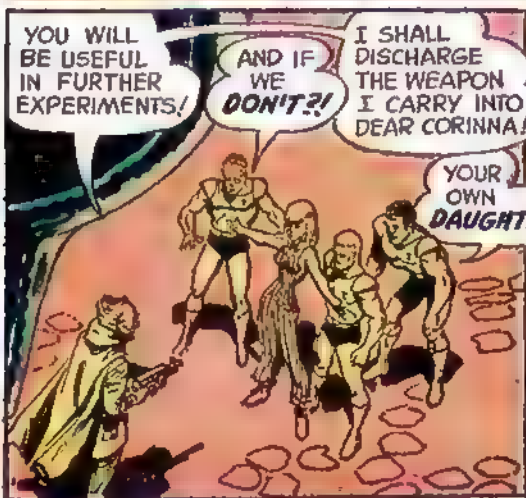
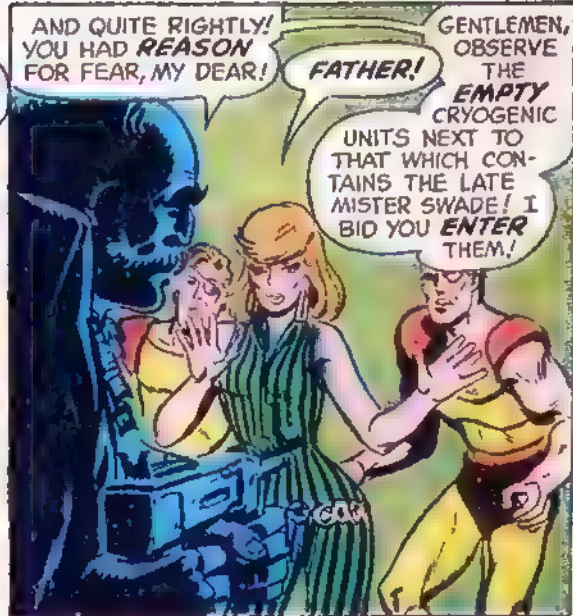
I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND! HE **TRANSFERRED** SWADE'S MIND TO ONE OF THOSE BLOBS--

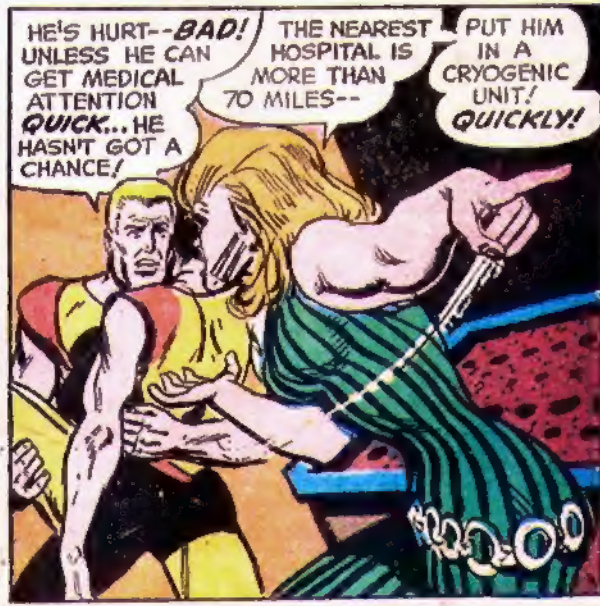
YES! BUT, AS YOU SAW, THE ATTEMPT WAS **NOT** A SUCCESS! INSTEAD OF **ELI SWADE**, MY FATHER CREATED A BRUTAL, MINDLESS MONSTROSITY!



WE HAVE PRESERVED **ELI SWADE'S** REMAINS IN THIS **CRYOGENIC UNIT**, FROZEN AT ABSOLUTE ZERO!

MY FATHER IS QUITE PERSISTENT! I BELIEVE HE HOPES TO CONTINUE HIS HORRIBLE TAMPERING WITH NATURE!

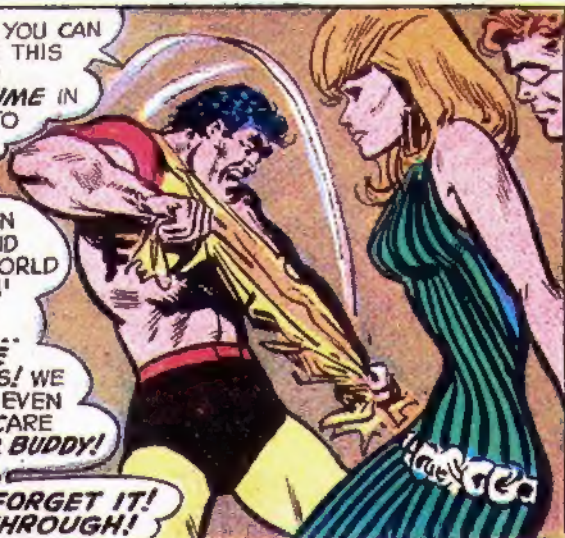




WELL, YOU CAN SHOVE THIS STUPID **COSTUME** IN NEXT TO 'IM!

WE RUN AROUND THE WORLD PLAYIN' HERO! YEAH... **SOME** HEROES! WE CAN'T EVEN TAKE CARE OF OUR **BUDDY!**

SO--FORGET IT! I'M THROUGH!



I SYMPATHIZE WITH YOUR GRIEF! BUT I BEG YOU TO RECONSIDER...THE WORLD **NEEDS THE CHALLENGERS!**

EVIL FORCES--LIKE MY FATHER --CANNOT BE COMBATTED BY ORDINARY MEN WITH ORDINARY MEANS!



I PRAY YOUR FRIEND RECOVERS! AND UNTIL HE DOES...

... I SHALL HUMBLY ATTEMPT TO FILL HIS PLACE! WITH YOUR PERMISSION -- I COUNT MYSELF A **CHALLENGER!**



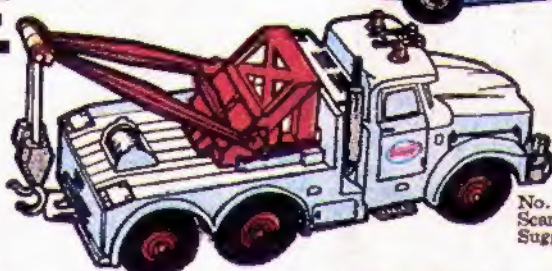
23

THE END

AS A TEAM, THE CHALLENGERS PERISHED IN THE BURST OF BULLETS WHICH STRUCK DOWN PROF--BUT ARE THUS REBORN IN THE QUIET WORDS OF CORINNA STARK!

NEW "MATCHBOX" KING-SIZE MODELS OF THE MONTH.

No. K-22
Dodge Charger
Sugg. retail \$1.50



No. K-2
Scammell Heavy Wreck Truck
Sugg. retail \$1.75

Two King Size models that prove good things come in big packages, too.

If you like cars and trucks that are big in size and big on features, you'll like these. Look for twin flasher lights, dual air horns, 10 treaded tires, double-lift hooks on the Scammell. Look for Tru-Guide Steering, doors that open and close, and an authentic Charger emblem on the Dodge. And always look for "MATCHBOX" at your dealer. Write for free catalogue:

FRED BRONNER CORPORATION, a Division of Lesney Products & Co. Ltd. 120 East 23rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10010

National Periodical PUBLICATIONS, INC.

909 THIRD AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022
(212) 758-6100

Dear DC Fans:

First, we would like to thank you for having bought this DC Magazine, even though it cost you three cents more than usual. Obviously, you like our magazine and consider our stories worth the extra three pennies. That makes us feel mighty proud!

However, we think we owe you an explanation as to why it was necessary to raise our price. Over these past years, the cost of producing our magazines has steadily risen. We have to pay more for art, engraving, paper and printing. You, too, have to pay more for most of the things you buy. U.S. Post Cards, which used to cost only 1¢, are now 5¢. Sodas and telephone calls were a nickel, now they are double that, ten cents. Hot dogs also were a nickel, now they are at least 25¢. Everything costs more today than just a few years ago. Your parents have to pay more for food, clothing and rent.

We feel confident that you understand the necessity for this adjustment, and will remain loyal fans. For our part, we promise to redouble our efforts to maintain the same high standards of publishing that have produced the world-famous line of DC Comics.

Sincerely yours,
The Editors

I'M **CAIN**--FRIENDLY CARETAKER OF THE **HOUSE OF MYSTERY**! THIS MISERABLE WRECK IS MY BROTHER, **ABLE**--NEW RESIDENT CARETAKER OF THE **HOUSE OF SECRETS**--WHO HAS THE AUDACITY TO CHALLENGE MY VASTLY SUPERIOR STORY-TELLING ABILITY! HE ACTUALLY THINKS HE CAN TELL MYSTERY STORIES AS **GROOVY** AS MINE--!



LET'S CHAT WITH THE CHALLS

Address all mail to:
CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN
National Periodicals
909 Third Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022

B-244

Dear Editor:

Please, some answers to several burning questions. (1) Are subscriptions no longer available? (2) What has happened to Bob Brown, who formerly drew CHALLENGERS? (3) What are the chances of bringing back the Gargoyle and teaming him with Villo? (4) Please relay the following issues that I want to your collectors' source.

Sam Falin, Western Kentucky University,
Bowling Green, Ky.

(1) That's right, no more subs because the Front Office ordered it. We announced that a long time ago, so from now on you can only clamp onto our champ Challs at your newsstand or any other place comic mags are sold. (2) Bob Brown's been bounced over to "Superboy" and "Detective Comics," where he's doing his thing, and superbly, at that. (3) Who knows what the crystal ball predicts for our tenacious team? Maybe that grotesque Gargoyle and Villo, the world's worst villain, will pop up again. (4) Your request for those specific back numbers have been forwarded to a source that may be helpful. You'll hear directly.—Ed.

...

Dear Editor:

The recent supernatural stories were just great! Just the ticket for them to have earned their name—Challengers of the Unknown! I hope you continue in this vein.

Ken Belden, Sylmar, Calif.

That we plan to do, Ken. In the beginning, they explored the realm of the weird, then went on an adventure kick that involved them with typically comic mag monstrosities—human, sub-human, and super-human—because our fiendish fans demanded it. So now we're making an about-face. We're re-entering the eerie and suspenseful world of the supernatural with an emphasis on our Challs' characterization as well as pitting them against fantastic foes. Few, if any scripters, can match that demon Denny O'Neil when it comes to telling tales of fear with his quivering quill pen.—Ed.

...

Dear Editor:

"The Dream Killers" was excellent, but I think it should've been expanded to 23 pages. I especially liked the effect of the black-and-white panels because they fit the story's mood. By the way, early in the yarn, the Challs leave their HQ for fresh air, but isn't it supposed to be underwater? And in the middle of the ocean yet? However, maybe it was a special land-

based HQ they use now and then.

Tony Isabella, Cleveland, O.

With Prof inheriting his pappy's fabulous fortune and footing the bill for headquarters sites, they could even have one for each season in the year. Credit Jack Sparling for devising that ingenious black-and-white sequence. It was inspired by a nightmare.—Ed.

...

"Whoever designed those new costumes for our boys is great, and that hour-glass symbol is real neat," writes Mike Barr from Akron, O. (Where you been, bubby? They donned those duds 'way back in issue #43 in 1965. Don't stay away too long, now 'cause they're due for a change, so stay in touch.—Ed.)... "Why not have Prof create a belt with pockets containing different gadgets and weapons?" asks Alfonzo Battise of Philadelphia. (Because, pardon the pun, that's Batman's bag!—Ed.)

"Congratulations on your new trend for the CHALLENGERS," applauds Darlene Dachsteiner of Fort Richey, Fla. "You've made them real to many people." (So you've noticed it, too!—Ed.)... "You once revealed that bearded Jack Sparling likes to slip his self-portrait into his work," scribbles Sam Strachey from San Francisco. "Didn't I spot his likeness on the first page of 'The Devil's Circus' and on page 7, as the tottering gent, in 'The Dream Killers'?" (Sneaky, isn't he? He has that irresistible urge to insinuate himself that just can't be overcome. What a way to find fame!—Ed.)

"Some issues ago, you invited readers to submit incidents that gave them a second chance, just as the Challs," pens Wally Hopkins of Glen Carbon, Ill. "Well, I would like to apply for membership in that exclusive organization. At birth, I was only two pounds. Doctors claimed I wouldn't live through the night; my twin brother would somehow be affected, too. They continued to expect me to die, but, like the Challs, I cheated death and have been living on so-called borrowed time for nearly 22 years. My brother turned out all right, too. Only 14 other people in the whole world have been similarly afflicted. This qualifies me, doesn't it?" (You're a charter member, Wally! If any of our readers want to relate their own death-defying experiences which gave them a second chance, we're eager to hear.—Ed.)... "If any of my pals dislike Red's eye patch," suggests Matt Humphreys of Sabina, O., "may I hint that you give him a glass eye?" (And maybe give Rocky a brain transplant?—Ed.)